



NSW: STATE OF THE ARTS

THE
GREENS

Making NSW the premier state for music, arts, culture and nightlife

Arts, music and culture lie at the heart of who we are. They tell our stories, bring our communities together and position us on the world stage. They are also fundamental to our state's economy, employing hundreds of thousands of people across NSW. Yet decades of chronic underfunding, a pandemic and more extreme weather have left our arts and cultural sector in NSW struggling to survive.

Over \$130 million of income was lost from the music and creative industries in NSW during the pandemic and many venues and cultural institutions were forced to close their doors for good. Without a significant funding boost to our arts and creative sectors, we run the risk of losing a generation of artists and the closure of more iconic venues across the state.

The Greens have a plan to invest in the arts, culture and music in the cities, the regions and in remote NSW by providing immediate incentives, long-term funding arrangements and creating secure, well paid jobs in the creative industries.

THE GREENS WILL:

- ▲ Give all 15 to 24 year olds 4 x \$50 vouchers a year to spend on live music of their choice.
- ▲ Phase pokies out of pubs and provide financial support for them to transition to live music.
- ▲ Introduce a minimum fee of \$250 for musicians and continue to push for a Universal Basic Income.
- ▲ Stop costly, over-policing and end the use of drug dogs and strip searches.
- ▲ Provide \$50m in funding to music festivals and provide greater government support.
- ▲ Work with First Nations communities to secure a world-class First Nations Cultural Centre in the Sydney CBD.
- ▲ Make NSW a leader in live music by establishing an Office of Contemporary Music and support all other policy asks by music industry stakeholders to revive and grow live music in NSW.
- ▲ Save the Powerhouse Museum and keep it in Ultimo.
- ▲ Support Western Sydney to become a centre of arts, music and culture.
- ▲ Refund Regional Arts NSW with ongoing annual funding of \$200k to support the network of 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations and advocate for regional arts statewide.



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GIG VOUCHERS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people drive music and culture, but a pandemic, rising costs and a lack of venues have locked the next generation out of experiencing a vibrant music scene.

The Greens plan will provide \$200 each year (in the form of 4 x \$50 vouchers) to people 15 to 24 years of age to spend on gigs and live music. The vouchers will only be able to be used at venues that are pokies free or transitioning out of pokies.

The vouchers will be distributed through the existing Service NSW infrastructure that was used to deliver the Dine and Discover vouchers. With just over 1 million people aged between 15 and 24 it is expected that this will cost approximately \$150m to \$200m per year¹ but the benefits to the state's economy as a result of a booming music industry are expected to outweigh this cost.

¹ [1,016,453, people from 15-24 in NSW. Previous service NSW vouchers have had an uptake of 95.% for 1, 67.3% for 4 and 38.9% for all six.](#)

THROW OUT THE POKIES, BRING BACK BANDS

The introduction of pokies into pubs in the 1990s has been blamed for the decimation of Sydney's live music scene over the past few decades. Now pubs are addicted to pokies revenue at the expense of other forms of entertainment.

The Greens will break the stranglehold these addictive machines have over our nightlife and bring back live music into pubs and other venues.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Phase pokies out of pubs in 5 years.
- ▲ Introduce a 'pokies super tax' and use part of the revenue to provide financial support to small and medium venues that want to transition away from pokies.

[Read our full pokies plan here.](#)

A NSW THAT COMES ALIVE AT NIGHT

After dark, the atmosphere changes and people come out to socialise and be



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entertained. A flourishing night time economy is essential for a thriving NSW, connecting its people, providing venues for arts and cultural events and employing more than 280,000 people across the state.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Improve access to night time public transport to ensure that consumers can safely enjoy a night out and workers can get home whenever their shift finishes
- ▲ Build more stages and infrastructure to support small-scale public performances and art in parks and other public spaces

SAVE OUR FESTIVALS

Festivals are the lifeblood of our music industry and the highlight of our state's entertainment year.

But the Liberal-National government's war on festivals has left huge events crippled and cancelled. Venues have been forced to pay hundreds of thousands for the costs of heavy-handed drug policing, and festival-goers have been targeted and hounded out.

The Greens will restore major festivals in NSW:

- ▲ Invest \$100 million in music and cultural festivals across the state, including Western Sydney and regional areas
- ▲ Ensure part of this funding goes towards stewardship training to offer on-the-job training for local emerging artists and crew, so we can ensure the longevity of high-quality festivals
- ▲ Require all festivals to produce an *Alcohol and Illicit Drug Harm Reduction Plan* that includes provision of pill-testing, peer-based services like DanceWize, water availability, shade and chill out spaces.
- ▲ End the use of dangerous heavy handed policing including sniffer dogs and strip searches.
- ▲ Introduce pill testing and drug counselling at festivals to keep patrons safe.
- ▲ Repeal the Music Festival Act 2019 and work with the festival industry to develop legislation that supports music festivals.



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END COSTLY OVER-POLICING AND MAKE EVENTS MORE SAFE

Heavy handed policing at venues and music festivals not only makes it harder for event organisers and promoters, but makes music festivals and other events less appealing for the public, including visitors to Sydney. It also increases the harms associated with drugs.

In 2019, the Coronial Inquest into Deaths at NSW Music Festivals recommended the NSW Government improve safety at festivals by providing pill testing. It also recommended scrapping drug detection dogs and strip searches after finding it did nothing to reduce drug use and instead led to some patrons taking dangerously large amounts of drugs before entering festivals.

Pill testing is currently available in more than 20 countries and after two trials at festivals, the ACT Government has established the first fixed-site pill testing centre in Australia.

The exorbitant rates that NSW Police charge promoters for a police presence that is over the top and intimidating is making it financially unviable for

promoters to hold festivals in NSW. Many are choosing to skip NSW altogether and hold their festivals in more welcoming states like Qld and Vic instead.

The Greens plan to make parties safe:

- ▲ End the use of drug detection sniffer dogs and strip searches
- ▲ Licence and fund pill testing services at fixed and on-site locations
- ▲ After two years Review the program's effectiveness at reducing harms associated with drug use.
- ▲ Provide harm reduction information including drug counselling by qualified health professionals and peer support workers to each user of the service based on substance tested and each individual's personal circumstances
- ▲ Implement all of the recommendations of the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Drug Ice and the Inquest into deaths at NSW music festivals by the end of 2023.



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MINIMUM FEE FOR MUSICIANS

Even before the pandemic, a quarter of all gigs for musicians were underpaid. However, COVID-19 was extremely challenging for artists and creative workers, exposing decades of underfunding of the sector. Our artists have been taken for granted for too long.

The SA, Qld, WA, Vic and ACT governments have endorsed a \$250 minimum fee for artists at publicly funded gigs.

The Greens' will support artists by introducing a minimum \$250 fee for musicians playing 3 hours or less at all publicly funded events in NSW.

This fee will be a floor, with venues able to pay artists more. The fee will be indexed and updated each year according to CPI.

The Greens have also released a plan to provide everybody, including artists and musicians, with a guaranteed minimum wage. This would protect artists and musicians from precarious financial instability while benefiting the community as a whole.

A VIBRANT WESTERN SYDNEY

One in 10 Australians live in Western Sydney, yet the region receives just 1% of Commonwealth arts funding and 5.5% of state funding.

Western Sydney has been ignored too long by governments when it comes to arts funding. Western Sydney's culturally diverse and extremely talented diaspora should be supported to bring their stories and creativity to the people of NSW and the world.

The Greens will:

- Establish an Aboriginal Art Gallery in Western Sydney.
- Provide \$40m in funding to restore the Roxy Theatre in Parramatta.
- Create a \$50 million arts and cultural investment fund to help support Western Sydney community arts.
- Set a quota of 50% of NSW Government hosted or funded conferences to be held in Western Sydney.
- Increase funding via Destination NSW for small and medium sized arts and culture events in western Sydney.



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- Improve public transport connectivity between Western Sydney population centres.
- Fund a new theatre and gallery in Campbelltown

MAKE NSW A LEADER IN MUSIC

Ten years of conservative Liberal National Government, lockdown laws, over policing and a pandemic have devastated what was once a thriving NSW Music scene.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Increase the number of late-night and 24 hour music venue licences.
- ▲ Establish an 'Office of Contemporary Music' that will develop and lead a 10-year contemporary music strategy, which includes improving the ease of putting on outdoor music events and includes a plan for protecting and supporting existing music venues, as well as initiatives, regulatory reform and funding to stimulate the development of new live music spaces and places. .
- ▲ Establish a "Return to Live Music" program through CreateNSW to

connect venues with the music industry.

- ▲ Fund Music NSW to support the music industry to get back on its feet post-pandemic, rebuilding skills, business relationships and audiences.
- ▲ Create a 'music infrastructure fund' to provide grants to maintain existing and develop new music venues and traineeship programs for Live Production and Technical services.

SAVE THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

The Greens will save the Powerhouse Museum by preserving and renewing the original museum and its role as a museum of applied arts, and sciences.

The NSW Government has spent years attempting to move the Powerhouse Museum from its Ultimo site. Now they claim they have 'saved' the Powerhouse Museum while moving ahead with plans that strip 'museum' from its name and seek to turn it into a creative industries precinct with much of the original Powerhouse Museum destroyed.



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The Powerhouse Museum is an important part of Sydney's historical and cultural fabric and must be protected for future generations.

The Greens will save the Powerhouse Museum by:

- ▲ Cancelling the NSW Government's plan to destroy the original Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo.
- ▲ Developing a plan for the renewal of the Powerhouse Museum in conjunction with the museum's architect to restore its role as an arts and science museum.
- ▲ Retaining the original Harwood building as part of the museum.
- ▲ Renaming the new museum at Parramatta and retaining the Ultimo Powerhouse Museums original identity.

FIRST NATIONS-LED ARTS & CULTURE

For decades, First Nations cultural leaders have been advocating for the establishment of a world-standard First Nations-led Indigenous Cultural Centre in Sydney that can host cultural events, exhibitions and performances.

A dedicated, large-scale Indigenous Cultural Centre in Sydney is long overdue, but plans for a purpose-built centre at Barangaroo were scrapped by the Liberal-National government.

The Greens have a plan to build and support First Nations-led institutions to develop First Nations arts around the state.

The Greens will:

- ▲ In partnership with existing First Nations-led organisations and industry bodies, support the development of a specific strategy for First Nations music and music business development in NSW, including by ensuring specific funding for First Nations-led artist and industry development programs, including seed funding for First Nations-run music businesses.
- ▲ Work with First Nations communities to secure commitment for an Indigenous Cultural Centre in the Sydney CBD dedicated to the performing visual arts, with seating for 500+ audiences, and spaces for performances, smoking



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ceremonies, exhibitions, studios and workshops

- ▲ Develop the Cultural Centre plans in full consultation with First Nations communities
- ▲ Embed a First Nations arts development team in every NSW Regional Arts Development Organisation
- ▲ End the trade in fake Aboriginal arts by banning the sale of First Nations cultural expression products that are not made and sold in collaboration with First Nations communities
- ▲ Provide \$500,000 to establish an independent Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Arts Association as a peak body representing the Aboriginal cultural sector in NSW
- ▲ Provide dedicated and long-term funding for First Nations-led arts organisations and individuals to ensure continued cultural storytelling, including the Aboriginal Regional Arts Alliance

SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL ART

While our major cities are a natural hub for the arts, regional NSW has a rich and vibrant cultural history.

But our regions need more support and development to enable artists to create where they live and ensure people in the regions have access to diverse arts and culture.

The Greens will prioritise small and independent initiatives, galleries and regional projects will not only provide flexible and broad employment options but will invigorate our neighbourhoods and communities with vibrant and exciting art.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Fund regional art and theatre projects to create vibrant cultural centres around NSW, including funding for councils to hire local artists to create local works
- ▲ Refund Regional Arts NSW with ongoing annual funding of \$200k to support the network of 15 Regional Arts Development Organisations and advocate for regional arts statewide



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- ▲ Fund small and medium-sized arts projects and provide grants for independent artists to increase arts employment and diversify our cultural sector
- ▲ Create mentorship programs directed towards young creatives, and youth arts programs
- ▲ Require major developers to make financial contributions towards subsidised art spaces
- ▲ Increase funding for public libraries across New South Wales, so that they are all well-resourced and completely free

ACCESSIBLE ARTS AND CULTURE

People with disability are more likely to create art or engage with art than the general population. But they earn on average 42% less than artists without disability, and are far less likely to be employed by the sector.

The barriers for people with disability to access arts and culture need to come down. The Greens will provide new pathways and opportunities for people with disability to build a career in the arts.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Develop a whole-of-government cultural infrastructure and tourism strategy, in close consultation with industry, to guide investment in new live music and theatre venues, major events, tours and festivals.
- ▲ Simplify public funding applications and reduce the burden on artists by introducing a first-tier “expression of interest” round.
- ▲ Double the number of places in the Createability internship program for emerging artists with disability, from 10 to 20
- ▲ Provide funding to small and medium-sized arts organisations for AUSLAN interpreters, audio descriptors and venue accessibility for performers and consumers
- ▲ Make Disability Inclusion Action Plans a requirement for arts organisations receiving annual or multi-year public funding, with rigorous reporting and transparency requirements



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A CLIMATE-READY ARTS SECTOR

The arts help us heal: stories, images and performance have a huge role to play in recovering from disasters. As the climate crisis worsens, we need to prepare a resilient arts sector that can weather the impacts and be part of the recovery response for their communities.

The Greens will:

- ▲ Establish and fund a state-wide Creative Resilience Network to connect disaster response specialists with arts organisations and coordinate training, plans and facilities throughout regional NSW
- ▲ Provide grants for flood and fire-impacted artists to purchase supplies they need
- ▲ Subsidise the creation of community spaces for artists to workshop, collaborate and provide healing through art
- ▲ Provide funding packages for climate-disaster impacted public libraries so they can build back their resources faster

SUPPORTING THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

The Greens will work closely with whichever party forms government to ensure that the music industry's demands for greater support, including regulatory reform, are met. The Greens NSW support the key asks by music industry stakeholders including ARIA, APRA AMCOS, MusicNSW, Vibe Lab, the Australian Festival Association and Live Performance Australia including:

- ▲ Developing a suite of policies and regulation to solve ongoing noise issues for live music and festival operators including the consideration of Special Entertainment Precincts, Agent of Change, neighbourhood and resident education programs and an update of the EPA Act to create Entertainment Sound regulation.
- ▲ Working in partnership with festival promoters, local councils, private landholders and state government departments to investigate new greenfield festival sites and permanent infrastructure at critical locations to retain and attract major events.



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HOW THE GREENS HAVE BEEN WORKING FOR YOU

- ▲ Convened an emergency roundtable in response to proposed Government regulations regarding music festivals.
- ▲ Worked with the opposition and crossbench to disallow the Liquor Amendment (Music Festivals) Regulation 2019 and the Gaming and Liquor Administration Amendment (Music Festivals) Regulation 2019 in the NSW Upper House.
- ▲ Successfully moved amendments to the Music Festivals Bill 2019 to remove onerous requirements in the safety management plans required of designated festivals and remove the 12 months imprisonment penalty for festivals that do not comply with an approved safety management plan.
- ▲ Successfully passed amendments to the Liquor Amendment (Night-time Economy) Act 2020 to allow:
 - Small bars to sell take-away cocktails and to close for private functions
 - Local councils to remove draconian live entertainment conditions
 - Small bars to trade on restricted trading days including Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

FIND ALL OUR POLICIES:

greens.org.au/nsw/policyplatform2023